

REMARKS

It is initially noted that the finality of the rejection is improper and premature. There was no amendment to the claims of any significance in the last response (only correction of a misspelling). Accordingly, providing of a translation the Abstract of Akino et al. for the first time amounts to a first citation of this reference not required by an amendment. The fact that Akino et al. may have been cited in another application has no bearing in this application. The translation is not of record in this application and the undersigned is unaware whether or not a translation was provided in other application.

Claims 17 to 22 remain active in this application and unamended.

Claims 17 to 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akino et al (J.P. No. 2000-77593) in view of Huang et al. (U.S. 5,994,757) further in view of Grunwald et al (U.S. 3,819,497). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

The subject application claims priority dating back to provisional application 60/125,304, filed March 19, 1999. According to the English language translation of Akino et al., the publication date of Akino et al. is March 14, 2000 which is subsequent to the effective filing date of the invention as disclosed in the subject application. While it is noted that the examiner has underlined the application date of Akino et al., this is not an effective date for this reference as the examiner should be aware. In view of this fact, the rejection is without merit.

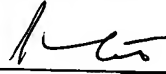
Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Huang et al. in view of Grunwald et al. .The rejection is respectfully traversed.

It is again respectfully submitted that the combination of Huang et al. with Grunwald et al. is improper since there is no teaching or suggestion to combine the references. The invention herein as well as the Huang et al. patent relate to the manufacture of leadframes. Grunwald et al. has nothing whatsoever to do with leadframes. It follows that the only suggestion to combine the references is derived from the subject application. The combination is therefore based upon hindsight and improper.

In view of the above remarks, favorable reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

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